



Organizational rules for the oral hearings at Local Division The Hague – Public attendance –

The Hague, 21 May 2024

The purpose of this document is to set out the framework conditions for public attendance at oral hearings held at the Local Division The Hague of the Unified Patent Court.

1. The oral hearings of the Unified Patent Court are open to the public. However, for reasons including confidentiality and business secrecy, certain hearings might be held behind closed doors. In addition, the hearings policy grants the Presiding judge the power to order at any time some or all of the public attendees to leave the room.
2. Any oral hearing shall be announced as soon as possible on the website of the Unified Patent Court, specifying in particular the names of the parties, the nature of the action, the date and time of the hearing. Unless otherwise specified, the hearing shall take place at the seat of the Court of First Instance of the Unified Patent Court:

Court of First Instance – Local Division The Hague
The Hague District Court
Prins Clauslaan 60, 2595 AJ
The Hague, The Netherlands

When the hearing is held at a different location, the address will be specified in the notice published on the website, as well as the access arrangements if these differ from those described above.

3. A total of 18 seats in the courtroom are reserved for the parties and their representatives and counsel, equally divided between the parties to the proceedings. The parties are requested to inform the The Hague registry (contact_the-hague.loc@unifiedpatentcourt.org) of the number, names and roles of the participants who wish to attend, no later than 3 days before the date of the hearing. If a party deems it necessary for a greater number of persons than the permitted number to attend, they shall request permission from the judge who set the hearing (Presiding judge or Judge-rapporteur, as the case may be) at least 5 days in advance; in such a case, attendance by video link should be preferred for the supernumerary persons.
4. A total of 20 seats are available in the courtroom for the public to attend the hearing, of which 3 seats are reserved for press card holders. The 3 seats reserved for journalists and the 17 seats reserved for public observers will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, in order of arrival at the reception of the Court. No guarantee of a seat allocation can be given prior to the day of the hearing. Any press seats not allocated 5 minutes before the start of the hearing may be redistributed to the public. To ensure the calmness and quality of the proceedings, late entries to the courtroom will not be permitted once the hearing has begun, except in exceptional circumstances.
5. The number of seats available to the public may be restricted without notice, in particular for public health reasons. Moreover, observing the appropriate hygiene and physical distancing measures is highly recommended. In such cases, attendees are encouraged to wear a face mask.
6. The courtroom – and any room where the hearing is being relayed – will be opened to the public only 10 minutes before the announced hearing time.
7. Please note that the public seats are not equipped with tablets or electric sockets.
8. To ensure the calmness and quality of the proceedings, all those attending the hearing, whether in the courtroom or in a relay room, are required to put their mobile phone on silent mode.

9. An audio recording of the hearing will be made by the Unified Patent Court (Rule 115 RoP).

Under no circumstances are attendees permitted to make any audio or visual recordings of the proceedings, either in the courtroom or in the relay room.

Photographs are not permitted, except before the start of the hearing, and only with the prior agreement of the Presiding judge.

10. The parties to the proceedings, and their representatives and counsel, are advised that the public seats are located immediately behind the seats allocated to the parties. It is therefore their responsibility to take appropriate precautions to prevent the disclosure of any confidential information.

11. The Presiding judge, being the person in charge of the policy for the hearing, shall at all times remain free to take any decision that he or she deems appropriate – even if it deviates from these rules – regarding the conduct of the hearing and public attendance.

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Presiding Judge Local Division The Hague

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